

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application in light of the above amendments is courteously solicited.

Applicant has cancelled claims 1-12 and 19-30.

Applicant has amended claims 15 and 16 so as to depend from either allowed claim 13 or allowed claim 14. Claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 16 which is now in condition for allowance.

In light of the foregoing, all of the claims as pending are in condition for allowance and an early indication of same is respectfully requested.

An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

If any additional fees are required in connection with this case, it is respectfully requested that they be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-0184.

Respectfully submitted,

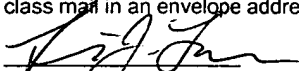
JIRO NAGAOKA ET AL.

By

Gregory P. LaPointe
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Reg. No. 28,395

Date: December 9, 2003

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: "Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313" on December 9, 2003.


Lori J. Larson